



U.S. Senator Judd Gregg, Chairman

Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions

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GREGG, HELP COMMITTEE APPROVE WEST NILE VIRUS BILL

Washington, DC – Today Senator Judd Gregg (R-NH) and the HELP Committee unanimously passed legislation to help stop the spread of the dangerous West Nile Virus this summer. The Mosquito Abatement for Safety and Health (MASH) Act, will direct federal dollars to state and local governments to control their mosquito population, which is the primary carrier of the West Nile Virus. The Gregg-sponsored bill will also instruct the National Institutes of Health to conduct research on how best to control insects and vermin responsible for spreading diseases like West Nile.

“Since the West Nile Virus suddenly and mysteriously appeared in North America a few years ago, it has become a credible threat to anything a mosquito preys upon, including humans. This bill will spur local and state governments to coordinate efforts and control their local mosquito population and in turn prevent the spread of the West Nile Virus. As spring turns into summer and the mosquitoes start hatching we need to have this law in the books. Helping local governments contain their mosquito population this summer is our best chance at avoiding another season of outbreaks,” said Gregg.

Summary of the MASH Act:

S. 1015, The Mosquito Abatement for Safety and Health (MASH) Act

- Provides \$100 million in local grants and research to control the mosquito population – the primary carrier of the West Nile Virus.
- Creates grants of up to \$100,000 for cities to implement mosquito control plans.
- Creates grants of up to \$10,000 for states to coordinate plans among cities.
- Instructs the NIH to conduct research on how best to control insects and vermin responsible for spreading diseases like the West Nile Virus.

At today's mark up the committee also passed:

S. 686, The Poison Control Center Enhancement and Awareness Act Amendments

- Authorizes funding for maintaining the national toll-free number to poison control centers as well as the nationwide media campaign to promote using the poison control centers.
- Standardizes the poison prevention and poison control centers
Improves national toxic exposure surveillance.

S. 888, Reauthorization of the Museum and Libraries Services Act

- Provides much needed support to our museums and libraries.
- Authorizes \$250 million for libraries and \$41.5 million for museums in 2004.
- Doubles the minimum state allotment under the Grants to State Library Agencies Program up to \$680,000.
- Coordinates its provisions with the school library provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act.

S. 504, American History and Civics Education Act of 2003

- Reestablishes the importance of American history and civics in our classrooms.
- Creates grants for Presidential Academies for K-12 teachers to strengthen their ability to teach American history and civics.
- Creates grants for Congressional Academies where outstanding high school juniors and seniors can further study American history and civics.
- Creates a national alliance for history and civics teachers to share ideas and innovations.

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